

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) No, Madam.

(b) Does not arise.

American military action against other countries

1286. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to US' intention of military action against other countries after its actions against Afghanistan trampling upon national sovereignty and in flagrant defiance of international laws; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) Government has seen media reports in this regard.

(b) Government is not in a position to comment on speculative reports on possible intentions of a foreign Government.

Detention of Indian youth in Pakistan

1287. SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some youths from Punjab, who were sent abroad illegally by travel agents, have been detained/arrested by Pakistan recently;

(b) whether some Members of Parliament have brought this incidence to Government's notice and furnished the details of the detained persons; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) On persistent efforts undertaken by Government, 31 Indian nationals, mostly from Punjab, were released and repatriated to India on 1.10.2001. Subsequently it was learnt that four more persons from Punjab, who had reportedly entered Pakistan illegally, were also arrested. Government have taken up with the Government of Pakistan the issue of their early release and repatriation. Government of Pakistan is, however, yet to acknowledge their detention.